

P-16 COUNCIL

The advisory P-16 Council (preschool through college) began in 1999, comprising members of the Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education. To better integrate all of Kentucky's education sectors, the P-16 Council expanded to include representatives of the Education Professional Standards Board (the agency that certifies P-12 teachers), the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, and the Cabinet for Workforce Development. The P-16 Council supports initiatives to improve teacher preparation and professional development, align high school and adult education curricula with college and workplace expectations, and raise the level of educational attainment in Kentucky.

In 2001, it endorsed recommendations for college readiness in writing and mathematics aimed at reducing the large proportion of first-year college students in Kentucky needing remedial assistance. The recommendations were developed by teams of high school and postsecondary educators. The Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education are examining ways to implement these recommendations, and local P-16 councils are working to implement them at the district and regional levels.

In 2001, the P-16 Council endorsed the creation of a single rigorous curriculum for all high school students and directed the staffs of the Department of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education to develop such a curriculum for consideration. This effort is supported by Kentucky's selection as one of five states to participate in the American Diploma Project. Sponsored by Achieve, Inc., The Education Trust, and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, the project's goal is to align high school standards with college and workplace expectations so that high school performance can be used by colleges and employers in admissions, placement, and hiring decisions.

The Council on Postsecondary Education, the Department of Education, and the Education Professional Standards Board are working to provide professional development for current teachers that better supports their work. The Council on Postsecondary Education sponsored three conferences in the past two years – one for arts and science and education deans, and two headed by our public and independent college chief academic officers – to make sure teacher education is a university-wide responsibility. The chief academic officers assembled leadership teams on their campuses that are creating new ways to involve more faculty in partnerships with our public schools. The EPSB has contracted with the Kentucky Virtual University to make quality professional development accessible online through a new Web site: www.KyEducators.org.

The Council on Postsecondary Education provided funding to 15 local and regional P-16 councils across the state over the past two years. Local councils include representatives from public and independent postsecondary institutions, school districts, early childhood and adult education, business, and labor who meet to address a variety of issues, including preparation of high school students for college.

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Questions Governing Board Members Might Ask

1. What can we do to get our community to “think P-16”?
2. What are we doing to improve the quality and quantity of P-12 teachers?
3. What are we doing to acknowledge and reward faculty for working with local school districts to increase college attendance and readiness?